

PORELLA GRAY, 1848 (POLYZOA): PROPOSED DESIGNATION  
UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF *MILLEPORA COMPRESSA*  
J. SOWERBY, 1805 (*NON* LINNAEUS, 1758) AS TYPE-SPECIES.  
Z.N.(S.) 1872

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1. The genus *Porella* was introduced by Gray (1848 : 127) monotypical for *Porella cervicornis*, for which the following synonyms were listed:

*Porus cervinus*, Borl[ase] Cornw. 240. t.24. fig. 7

*Millepora cervicornis*, [Ellis &] Soland[er] 134; Stew[art] Elem. ii. 427;  
Turt[on] Brit. Faun. 204

*M. compressa*, Sowerby, Brit. Misc. 83, pl. 41; Turt[on] Brit. Faun. 204;  
Jameson, Wern. Mem. i. 560

*Cellepora cervicornis*, Flem[ing] Brit. Anim. 532; Thompson, Ann. Nat.  
Hist, v. 253; Couch, Zooph. Cornw. 49; Corn. Faun. iii. 111. pl. 20. fig. 1;  
Johnst[on] Hist. Brit. Zooph. ed. 2. p. 299. t.55

*Millepora alvicornis*, Esper, Millep. t.5, 6, 7

*Eschara cervicornis*, Oken, Lehrb. Nat. 86?; Lamk. Hist. ii. 174. ed. 2. ii. 267  
Four specimens were indicated:

a. Cork. Presented by Miss Elliot.

b, c. Shetland. Presented by P. Neil, Esq.

d. —?

2. Gray's synonymy covers two superficially similar species, known in recent literature as *Porella cervicornis* (*Millepora cervicornis* Pallas, 1766) and *P. compressa* (*Millepora compressa* J. Sowerby, 1805). The former is known principally from the Mediterranean and does not occur around the British Isles; the latter has a boreal distribution, being well known in British and Norwegian waters. That the Cornish species described by Borlase (1758)—who did not employ binominal nomenclature—differed from *M. cervicornis* was noted long ago by Ellis & Solander (1786 : 134), though this was overlooked by Fleming (1828 : 532). Johnston (1838 : 276; 1847 : 299) stated that the British species was "... entirely different from *Eschara cervicornis*, with which it has been confounded". Although Gray's List was based on Johnston's Collection, after its presentation to the British Museum (Natural History), Gray either overlooked or ignored Johnston's comment. The name *cervicornis* remained in use for both species until Hincks (1880 : 330) adopted Sowerby's name for the British species. Gray's four specimens, a-d, belong to *M. compressa* Sowerby.

3. It has been generally assumed (e.g. by Bassler, 1953, and Harmer, 1957) that *Millepora compressa* Sowerby, of which Gray had specimens, was the valid type of the genus. Lagaaij (1952 : 97), however, questioned this, and the assumption appears to run contrary to Art. 70 of the International Rules (1961). A ruling on type-species is now urgently required, for Osburn (1952 : 391)

stated that *Millepora cervicornis* Pallas and *M. compressa* Sowerby are not congeneric, and Cook (1968) has referred the former to *Smittina* Norman (in the restricted sense defined by Osburn, 1952). If the genus *Porella* is to retain its currently accepted meaning, therefore, *Millepora compressa* Sowerby must be the type-species.

4. *Millepora compressa* is usually attributed to Sowerby (1805 : 83), but Sowerby clearly did not intend to introduce a new name since he gave the synonym "*Millepora compressa* ? Gmel. v. 1. p. 3785". In fact, Linnaeus introduced *Millepora compressa* in *Systema Naturae* ed. X (1758 : 792), noting "Habitat in M. Mediterraneo", and it is mentioned again in ed. XII (1767 : 1283) as well as in Gmelin's ed. XIII (1791 : 3785). Since Linnaeus was describing a Mediterranean species, *Millepora compressa* Sowerby cannot be the same. Thus before *M. compressa* Sowerby can be accepted as valid, it is necessary to suppress *M. compressa* Linnaeus—a species which has never subsequently been recognized.

5. Stabilization of nomenclature requires that an established specimen of *Millepora compressa* Sowerby be designated as neotype, and the one proposed is that described and illustrated by Johnston (1838 : 276, pl. 33; 1847 : 298, pl. 35) from South Devon, registered in the British Museum (Natural History) as 127d in the Johnston Collection, and believed (Kirkpatrick, MS entry in the specimen catalogue) to be Gray's specimen d (see final line of para. 1 above). Hincks (1880 : 330) has already referred to this as "the type specimen in the British Museum", but evidently meant by this that it was the specimen on which Johnston based his account.

6. In view of the above circumstances, the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is requested:

- (1) to use its plenary powers to suppress for the purposes of the Law of Priority and the Law of Homonymy the specific name *compressa* introduced by Linnaeus, 1758, or used by any subsequent author prior to J. Sowerby, 1805, in the binomen *Millepora compressa*;
- (2) to designate as neotype of *Millepora compressa* J. Sowerby, 1805, the specimen in the British Museum (Natural History) Johnston Collection 127d;
- (3) to use its plenary powers to set aside all designations of type-species of *Porella* Gray, 1848, and to designate as type-species of *Porella* Gray, 1848: *Millepora compressa* J. Sowerby, 1805, as defined by its neotype in (2) above;
- (4) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology: *Porella* Gray, 1848 (gender: feminine), type-species designated in (3) above: *Millepora compressa* J. Sowerby, 1805;
- (5) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology: *compressa* J. Sowerby, 1805, as published in the binomen *Millepora compressa* (type-species of *Porella* Gray, 1848);
- (6) to place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology: *compressa* Linnaeus, 1758, as published in the binomen *Millepora compressa* (as suppressed under the plenary powers in (1) above).

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